



## *The Old Ironsides Report*



11 July 2003

### **Senator talks about downed pilot, issues with 1 AD Floridians**

**Spc. Anthony K. Reinoso, 372<sup>nd</sup> MPAD**

BAGHDAD, Iraq – First Armored Division soldier's from the state of Florida dined with one of their U.S. senator July 8.

Sen. Bill Nelson expressed his appreciation for the soldiers' service and discussed his deeper purposes behind his visit to Baghdad.

"This is one of the most successful military operations that the history of the United States," Nelson said. "Now the tough part is trying to stabilize Iraq. We got our hands full trying to stabilize this country politically and economically."

The civilian administration tasked with Iraq's reconstruction has a lot to accomplish. Nelson said. However, it cannot get the job done until the area is secure. It is up to soldiers to accomplish that mission.

Nelson said another reason he came to Iraq was to continue his search for a pilot lost during the Gulf War.

"I am here because I am looking for a Florida pilot from Jacksonville that was shot down on the first night of the Gulf War twelve years ago," Nelson said. "His name is Capt. Scott Speicher."

According to reports, Speicher's plane was downed by an anti-aircraft missile the first night of the 1991 Persian Gulf War. The Pentagon declared several months later that he had been killed in action, but last year revised his status to "missing in action, captured."

Defense officials made a mistake by declaring the pilot dead, Nelson said. There is evidence showing that Speicher was alive through the late 1990s.

In April, investigators moving with U.S. forces through Iraq found Speicher's initials — "MSS" — etched into a wall in the Hakmiyah prison in Baghdad. An informant at the time said an American pilot was held at the prison in the mid-1990s.

Nelson added that he is very frustrated by how long it is taking to get DNA results back from a strand of hair that was found in the Baghdad cell

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**U.S. Senator Bill Nelson of Florida talks with 1st Armored Division soldiers during an informal dinner held in the 4th Brigade hangars July 8. The senator discussed and several issues and announced that there may be new information regarding downed pilot Capt. Scott Speicher who was shot down during the Gulf War. Photo by Spc. Christopher Stanis, 1 AD PAO.**

where the initials were carved. The DNA sample was taken back in April, but as of yet, no official results are available.

"The clues would suggest that there are new leads. [the CIA is] following those right now from a multiplicity of sources," Nelson said.

"Is he still alive?" Nelson asked. "If so, (let's) try to find him."

In addition searching for Speicher, Nelson said that he wanted to meet with soldiers from Florida.

"Half of our Florida National Guard has been activated. A lot of those that have been activated are here in Iraq," he said. "I am here to express the appreciation of the people of our country for the kind of service that you are doing."



## NEWS

### Bush Will Help Botswana in AIDS Fight

GABORONE, Botswana (AP) - President Bush pledged to the nation with the world's highest AIDS infection rate that it will have a strong partner in his administration in fighting the disease. "You will not face this enemy alone," he said Thursday. But even as he was delivering the pledge, his \$15 billion, five-year AIDS program was being trimmed in Congress.

### Tropical Storm Claudette Heads to Mexico

CANCUN, Mexico (AP) - Tropical Storm Claudette churned toward Mexico's Yucatan peninsula on Thursday, threatening to strengthen into a hurricane and plow into this resort city popular with Mexican and foreign tourists. The Mexican government issued a hurricane warning along the entire length of the eastern Yucatan peninsula, including Cancun, and put the storm on a track directly over the nearby island of Cozumel, a frequent stopover for cruise ships.

### Twins Return in Separate Coffins to Iran

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) - Friends wept and a brass band played solemn music as the coffins of formerly conjoined twins - who touched the world with their determination to lead separate lives - arrived in Iran on Thursday for burial. Ladan and Laleh Bijani, 29, died within 90 minutes of each other Tuesday after doctors in Singapore separated their heads but failed to control the bleeding in the unprecedented surgery.

### Spain Opens First Mosque in 500 Years

GRANADA, Spain (AP) - The cry of a muezzin echoed from a hilltop overlooking the Alhambra as Spain got its first new mosque since Muslim rule ended more than 500 years ago. Dignitaries from Arab and Muslim countries worldwide gathered at the former seat of Moorish government for the opening Thursday of the Great Mosque of Granada, crowning a fitful and emotionally charged project that began in 1981.

### Chaplain's thought for the day:

One By One

A young man strolling along a beach at dawn stopped to watch an older man pick up starfish and toss them back into the sea. The older man said he was rescuing the starfish before the hot summer sun could bake them.

Sarcastically, the young man said, "There must be hundreds of starfish here. How can you make any difference?" The old gentleman looked at the starfish in his hand before throwing it into the waves. "It makes a big difference to this one," he replied.

One by one we can make a difference here in Iraq.

Inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me" (Matthew 25:40).

## SPORTS

### Army Football to Leave Conference USA

WEST POINT, N.Y. (AP) -- Army's football team will leave Conference USA after the 2004 season to play as an independent again.

The U.S. Military Academy is making the move, in part, to have more flexibility in scheduling, superintendent Lt. Gen. William Lennox Jr. said Thursday.

"We are committed to building a competitive football program at the highest level," Lennox said.

Army joined the conference as a football-only member in 1998, after having been an independent since 1890. The departure will leave Conference USA with 10 football schools.

"We are not surprised. We have had ongoing discussions with the United States Military Academy regarding the future of its football program and Conference USA," commissioner Britton Banowsky said.

Army football has been mired in mediocrity since the Black Knights began playing in Conference USA.

Army, whose other athletic teams compete in the Patriot League, is 7-27 in five seasons in Conference USA, winning no more than two league games in a season. The Black Knights finished 1-11 in 2002 - losing 58-12 to Navy in the season finale - and are 5-29 in three years under head coach Todd Berry.

By joining Conference USA, Army's scheduling options became limited. With eight conference games and the interservice games against archrivals Navy and Air Force, the Black Knights only have one or two chances to schedule a regional or national opponent. Because of conference obligations, this year Army has only one home game at Michie Stadium in October, traditionally the peak month for attendance.

### Simon Not Charged for Swatting Mascot

MILWAUKEE (AP) - Pittsburgh first baseman Randall Simon will not face charges for hitting one of the Milwaukee Brewers' sausage mascots with his bat during a game. Prosecutors said Thursday they made the decision after reviewing tape of Wednesday night's game.

### Reports: Malone Commits to Lakers Deal

LOS ANGELES (AP) - Free agent Karl Malone has committed to sign with the Los Angeles Lakers, according to Web site reports Thursday. The Los Angeles Times and ESPN.com both cited sources in their reports.

## TODAY'S WEATHER

High: 113F

Low: 81F

